THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Task force on floods

†1298. SHRI JAM JETHMALANI:

DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Task Force with joint efforts of India and Nepal has been constituted to address the problem of floods in the country;

(b) if so, the names of the members of the Task Force; and

(c) by when the Task Force has been asked to submit its report?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV):

(a) Yes Sir. In the second meeting of the India - Nepal joint Committee on Water Resources (JCWR) held in October, 2004, it was *inter-alia* decided that a short term strategy identifying the vulnerable areas along various rivers should be jointly worked out on priority for which a Joint Committee was set up to identify the steps that could be taken by both sides to mitigate the devastation caused by the floods.

(b) The composition of the Joint Committee on the Indian side as finalised in the JCWR includes the following Members:

1.	Member, Ganga Flood Control Commission	Leader
2.	Representative, Water Resources Department, Government of Uttar Pradesh	Member
3.	Representative, Water Resources Department, Government of Bihar	Member
4.	Representative, Irrigation and Waterways Department, West Bengal (North Bengal Flood Control Commission)	Member
5.	Representative, Ministry of Water Resources, Government of India	Member
6.	Director. Ganga Flood Control Commission	Member - Secretary

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) The Joint Committee has been asked to submit its report in three months.

Accelerated irrigation benefit programme for Rajasthan

1299. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plan to accord Rajasthan a special status under the Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme due to its desert, drought conditions, hilly and tribal regions similar to Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and North-Eastern Region States;

(b) if so, by when and whether Rajasthan will be entitled to the same liberal norms as the above States for Central Loan Assistance under the said programme; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAY PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) There is no proposal at present to accord special status to Rajasthan under the Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP) at par with North-Eastern States and hilly States of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttaranchal and undivided Koraput, Bolangir and Kalahandi (KBK) Districts of Orissa.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Artificial recharge of ground water

1300. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY:
SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA:

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that his Ministry propose people's participation in water conservation in the country; and

(b) if so, what are the schemes envisaged by Government for artificial recharge of ground water to avoid water scarcity in the country?